

THE CLEVELAND MUSEUM OF ART
ARTIST BIOGRAPHY

MAY 89

Please complete and return the following questionnaire for our reference file on May Show artists.

FULL NAME: Joanne Alford Laessig PRESENT POSITION Studio Artist and
DATE AND PLACE OF BIRTH: 2/16/1955, Cleveland Heights, Ohio Part-Time Art Teacher
CATEGORY/PRIMARY MEDIA: Bead Embroidery; embroidery
ART TRAINING (Schools, Scholarships, etc.):

1980 BS Art Education Cleveland Inst. of Art/ Case Western Reserve Univ. Joint Program

1988 MFA Textiles Northern Illinois University, Dekalb

Tuition Waiver Scholarship, Graduate assistantship.

EXHIBITIONS IN WHICH YOUR WORK HAS BEEN SHOWN (include location and year): partial list

NEEDLE EXPRESSIONS, international juried show. 1978 Tulsa, OK (Director's Choice Award, Honorable Mention); 1982 Nashville Museum; 1988 Bloomington Illinois. Twice in traveling portion of this show.

FOCUS:FIBER CMA 1989, 1988, 1984, 1983, 1982, 1981, 1980, 1977.

EMERGING ARTISTS NIU Gallery, Chicago Il. 1987 Invitational

COLLECTIONS THAT NOW INCLUDE YOUR WORK:

AWARDS:

1989 BYZANTIUM BEADWORK SHOW Third Prize

1987 ARS NOVA Student juried show, Northern Illinois Univ. Second Prize

1980 (Undergraduate) Kennedy Prize for Distinctive Work in Art CWRU.

We would appreciate having a statement about your philosophy and work as an artist—either general or something specific about the piece(s) selected for this year's May Show to aid us in the preparation of gallery talks and in the release of publicity materials. For more space, use the back of this sheet.

The foundation of my work is an optimistic world-view. To me, creativity is a positive act that brings happiness; joy the most proper state for the artist. Sadness, pain and regret have their place, but in my work are shown within the context of a mostly beautiful and benevolent universe.

The beaded panels are a unique departure for materials seen mostly in couture or ethnographic contexts. I have loved beads since childhood, and have been experimenting with beads in embroidery since 1972. The enamel-like qualities of the glass beads - glittering, opacity/transparency, permanence of color - made

JOANNE ALFORD LAESSIG

bead embroidery the perfect combination of embroidery and enameling properties.

To evoke both time and place, I have used a spiral to represent the passage of time. Some spirals use color or texture rather than an image to represent place. The use of a spiral base-line has caused shifts in perspective that carry over into skewed perspective in some non-spiral pieces.

The shaped panels are mounted on sealed wood (for conservation purposes), and the beads will never lose brilliance: the color is intrinsic to the glass or stone.

The above is an excerpt from documentary material for my Master of Fine Arts One Person show documentation.

JOANNE ALFORD LAESSIG
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CLEVELAND HTS., OHIO 44118
321-7073

- EDUCATION December 1988 MFA/Textiles, Northern Illinois University, DeKalb, Illinois. (3.84 GPA)
January 1980 BS in Art Education, Cleveland Institute of Art/Case Western Reserve Joint
program. Honors: Dean's List, Kennedy Prize for Distinctive work in Art.
- EMPLOYMENT
AND
VOLUNTEER
WORK Presently involved in organizing a local folk music association, development of member-
ship, policy, budget.
1987-1988 Graduate Assistantship, Northern Illinois University, Textiles Department
Responsible for administrative work, maintenance of equipment, educational assistance,
supply inventory and purchase.
1986-1988 Campus Activities Board, Northern Illinois University. Weekly Coffeehouse
concert committee. Responsible for contacting acts, some contract negotiation,
scheduling and overseeing promotional flyers and press releases, Stage prep and record
sales. Spring 1988 Regional NACA Programing Conference delegate.
1983-1986 Member of the Board, Textile Arts Club of the Cleveland Museum of Art
Originated a newsletter for the Club, had major portion of the writing and all the
editing responsibility. Did Typing, paste-up, artwork and mailing.
1984 Show Chairman FOCUS:FIBER, Textile Arts Club juried members' show at the Cleveland
Museum of Art. Completely revamped entry blanks and entry procedure to conform to
needs of the registrar's office and new laws regarding sales of artwork, picked jurors,
cataloged show, oversaw publicity.
1982-1983 Art Department Chairman, Lutheran High School East, Cleveland Hts., Ohio.
1982-1983 City of Cleveland Hts. Adult Education: Taught Bead Embroidery.
1980-1985 Substitute teaching at highschool and College levels, studio work and
art fair and juried show participation.
Summer 1980 Cleveland Institute of Art Summer Program: weaving for High School students.
1976-1977 Part time and substitute teaching, Art and Art History, Beaumont School.
- SELECTED
SHOWS 1988 Nov.-Dec. A SENSE OF TIME AND PLACE, one-person MFA Show, Holmes Student Center Gallery,
Northern Illinois University.
NEEDLE EXPRESSIONS International Juried show, Bloomington Il. (also 1982/Nashville Museum,
traveling show, and 1978 Tulsa, OK., Traveling show, Director's Choice award and
Honorable mention.)
ARS NOVA Student Juried Show, Northern Illinois University. Second Prize.
EMERGING ARTISTS Northern Illinois University Gallery, Chicago Il. Invitational.
FOCUS:FIBER Textile Arts Club/Alliance Members' Juried Show, Education Wing, Cleveland
Museum of Art. Also 1985, 1984, 1983, 1982, 1981, 1980, 1977.
1987 ARS NOVA Student Juried Show, Northern Illinois University.
CASE WESTERN RESERVE ALUMNI INVITATIONAL SHOW
1983 STITCHERY 83 INTERNATIONAL. Pittsburgh, Pa.
- OTHER I do lectures and workshops on Bead Embroidery, and have been researching a book on
the subject for the last eight years.